Since the shapes are very simple, a special
/162 cont./
463 apprenticeship with a master is not absolutely necessary; Santos
323 Kiskue, at any rate, began making pots by himself after an
[467] accident that left him with a stiff left wrist. He uses the unmixed clay that stands near his house. Out of this, constantly moistening it, he shapes on a /163/ board lying on the ground an even, round "clay sausage," which he then presses flat with the palm of his hand. He builds up his pots out of this in spirals. They are put with their lower part on a shallow clay bowl, so that he can turn them easily in closing up the junctures (Ills. 184 to 186 /see pp. 282-283/). He lets the freshly made pots dry for about a week under a roof, then he takes them to a place where there is sufficient dry wood. Here he places the pots very close together, stacks wood and twigs over them, and lets them burn for about two hours. They are then ready for use.

i) Candlemaking

388 At the three annual church festivals a large number of
[796] candles (mbéla; Spanish: vela) are used to decorate the church.
[462] They are in part purchased, but largely homemade. Everyone is
[824] familiar with the process of manufacture, but for the festivals it is men's work. The wax is obtained from the wood laurel (Myrica pubescens Willd), whose small fruits, measuring about five to eight millimeters in diameter, are harvested in great masses in April and May. For this purpose the twigs are struck off and stripped of the fruits over the round berry net that is put in the opening of a large fiber bag. After they are dried, they are poured into a bag, boiled, and squeezed. The wax, caught in a vessel and dried, was formerly an important commercial product in the trade with the whites. In making the candles, wax is poured over the wicks until the proper thickness is obtained.

k) Fireworks

389 No celebration and no church festival is possible without
[796] setting off the greatest possible number of fireworks. The fire-
[541] crackers required for this are made by the men themselves.
[462]

/163 cont./ The powder, however, must be bought. As for its production, the general opinion is that it is made from human beings. The whites, they believe, fatten human beings, then hang them, and, while they are still alive, tap their fat, from which they then make powder. That is why the Paez do not like to send their children far away and do not let them go to the whites, because they believe that the latter would catch them in order to make powder from them.

/164/ To make the fireworks a piece of sheep gut is used, filled with powder and wound tightly with an agave string. The latter is waxed with beeswax for extra strength. One of these powder cases is used for the smaller firecrackers (koétes), while two, one over the other, are used for the larger firecrackers (kwatón), and under these is placed the fuse, which consists of a small bamboo tube, one to five centimeters long, filled with powder (Fig. 32 /see p. 256/). These two or three parts are wrapped in a maize leaf and fastened to a bamboo splice 20-60 centimeters long. When it is lighted, the firecracker rises to a height of 50 meters with a considerable whistle and then explodes.

5. Trade and Transportation

One cannot speak of trade in the commercial sense among the Paez, for they trade almost solely among themselves and abhor everything that has to do with business. Moreover, since there is no merchant class among them, there is no carrying trade. Merchants are regarded as do-nothings who, though they are needed, are nevertheless despised. Fundamentally the self-contained household economy predominates, and whatever one family does not have it barters for within the same village if possible. Only when this is not possible, thus when industrial products are involved, does one go to the weekly market held regularly at Inzá or Belalcázar, in order to buy the necessary articles. These include, above all, salt, as well as spades, machetes, aluminum pots, knives, scissors, spoons, needles,

1: Nachtigall--256 E-5 (1952-1953) 1955 SC15 Paez SC15

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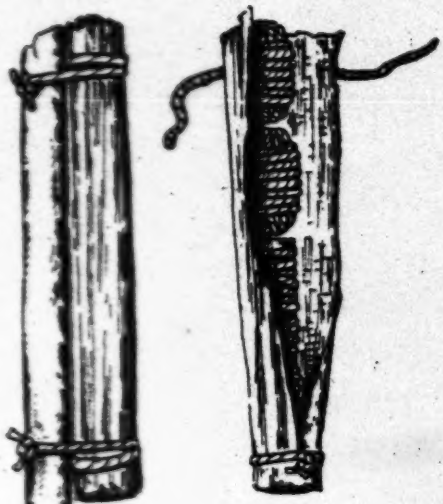

Fig. 32. Fireworks.

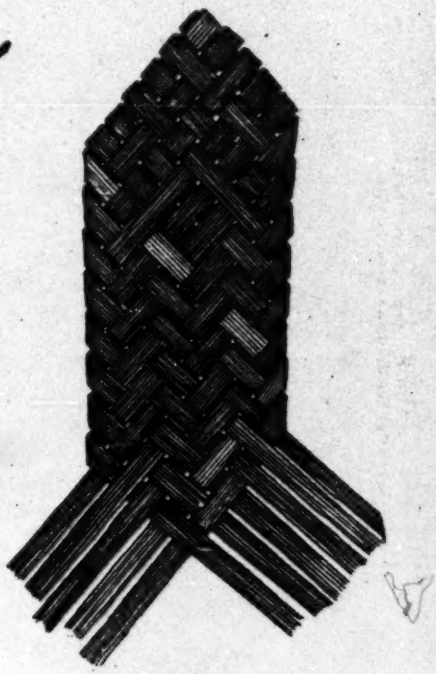

Fig. 33. Plaited strip for making the straw hat.

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[284]

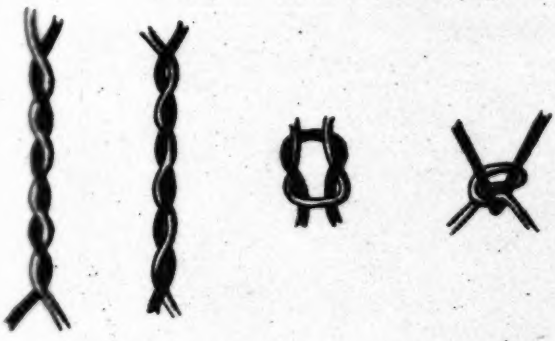

Fig. 34. a = S-twisting b = Z-twisting
c = symmetrical knots d = fish-net knots

4:Bernal Villa--29 E-5 (1952-1953) 1953 SC15 Paez SC15

/199 cont./

388 Up to a few years ago, the extraction of laurel wax was the
43 only industry among the Calderas people that brought them monetary returns. And it was the sole article of active trading with the whites. At first the price was good; one peso a pound; nowadays it is barely worth 40 centavos. Thus, there is no
388 market for this article. The fiesteros and the albaceros have chunks of wax in their chambers. The laborers melt it in a copper pan and pour it at once into bamboo tubes, mixed with hot water so that it will not solidify at once. Into it they dip the notched wicks of different lengths so as to saturate them with wax, then bring them out into the air so that they will harden, saturate them once more with wax, and continue in this way until the candle has acquired the desired thickness. Several dozen are made; some large ones for the table, others of medium size for the church, and smaller ones for the mayordomos.

X

Gunpowder

●389 The Paez are totally unfamiliar with the method of making
829 gunpowder. And to explain how it is obtained, they tell the
648 painful legend that it is made from human beings. It comes from a fat man, they say, fattened expressly for this purpose. He is hung up, a red-hot iron rod is inserted in his rectum; lard drips down; and this lard is the gunpowder. For this reason, they do not want to send their children to distant lands where the white man lives. They believe that they would be used to obtain gunpowder. "The white men greatly desire Indians in order to obtain gunpowder."

389 The Indians buy gunpowder in the urban centers. They
439 work it up. The technique is almost universally known.

/199 cont./

●389 Explosive charges are made in the following way. The powder is packed into small sheepskin cartridges; these cartridges /200/ are tied tightly with maguey thread. Then they are pierced in such a way that the powder can come in contact with the correspondent fuse. They make with these explosive charges:

Firecrackers: a charge attached to a short stick.

Skyrockets: reed tubes full of powder, with one explosive charge, attached to a long pole. They rise to considerable heights and end with an explosion.

Slingers: firecrackers made of three charges attached to a stick.

Castle: a structure resembling half an ellipse, made of flexible rods to which the explosive charges are attached.

[796] The fireworks-maker is selected especially by the fiestero or the albacero, and at the time of the fiesta he distributes the firecrackers personally among the elders with a great show [465] of deference. The albacero must kill a pig or a sheep to reward him for his work.

[461] The making of these objects is slow: a month or even more, not because it is complicated, but because steady work on it is tiresome.

389 During the making of these firecrackers, with the relative 787 tranquility that this implies, a man may come to know of a 75 destiny which he possibly had not suspected: becoming a medicine man. While sitting at his work he may feel the "signs" that herald his future activity. This was the case with a medicine man of Calderas. As a young man he knew nothing about remedies or "signs." But as he was making firecrackers, he felt the signs. He had five children at the time. After that he learned what the good and the bad remedies were from another famous medicine man. He put his knowledge into practice, cured a sick man, and devoted himself to being a medicine man. The signs, they say, are sent by God.